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TAGS: [PREL](#) [HR](#) [BH](#) [SR](#)
SUBJECT: DAS DICARLO'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT MESIC

REF: ZAGREB 920

Classified By: Rick Holtzapple, POL/ECON, Reasons 1.4 B/D

¶1. (C) EUR DAS Rosemary DiCarlo met with Croatian President Stjepan Mesic on October 12. DAS DiCarlo praised Croatia's efforts to prepare for NATO membership, and noted that public opinion in favor of NATO was rising in Croatia, and that Mesic's personal support for NATO membership had played an important role in this. Mesic replied that Croatia's future was clearly as part of NATO and the EU. On regional issues, Mesic reaffirmed Croatia's support for Bosnia's territorial integrity, but expressed concern about the efforts of RS President Dodik and Serbian PM Kostunica to deepen ties between the RS and Serbia further. On Kosovo, Mesic agreed with DAS DiCarlo that difficult decisions would be needed soon. He said the time had come to resolve Kosovo's status, and that it was clear it could never be part of Serbia. The GoC was actively engaged with Kosovo and its Serbs, sending emissaries there and meeting with Kosovar Serb representatives. Mesic added that the Kosovar Serbs had told him they knew Kosovo would become independent, but feared it would happen in a "euphoric" process that would damage minority interests. He had encouraged them to be more involved in Kosovar institutions "to help shape their own destiny", but that they said Belgrade prevents it. Mesic opined that the key lay in Belgrade, but that no leader there was strong enough to face reality. He concluded by saying that U.S. engagement remained a precondition for finding solutions to the region's remaining problems.

¶2. (C) Mesic also made reference to his recent meeting with Iranian President Ahmadinejad (REFTEL). He was aware of the objections to his meeting, but argued that "we should tell him our views directly." Mesic added that, as a witness to the Holocaust in his home town, he told Ahmadinejad that it was impossible to deny the Holocaust, and that it was unacceptable to call for Israel's removal from the map.
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